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AUTHOR Acton, William
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ABSTRACT

Recent research on affective variables and classroom second language learning suggests that: (1) affective variables are context-sensitive in at least two ways; (2) attitudes are contagious, and the general attitude of students can be influenced from various directions; (3) research in pragmatics, discourse analysis, and communicative functions related to dealing with emotion, will provide a better understanding of the language of expressing emotions and attitudes in this and other cultures and languages; and (4) any expression of affect is a symbolic, cognitive activity. Attitude, motivation, and affect must be seen as important components of one's theory of second language acquisition and pedagogy, but should not be treated as conceptually preceding or relatively independent of cognition and cognitive-behavioral outcomes. The affective domain should be seen as subsumed within a more cognition-centered psychological theory and the communicative curriculum. (MSE)

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AFFECT IN THE "COMMUNICATIVE" CLASSROOM: A MODEL*

William Acton
University of Houston

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The study of affect as a predictor of human behavior has developed rapidly in this century (e.g., Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum 1957). The importance of "affective" variables to second language learning theory, however, was generally not recognized or at least researched systematically until the late 1960's. A wide range of affective constructs, such as attitude, anxiety, motivation, self-esteem, ethnocentricity, social distance, ego permeability, and culture shock have been investigated searching for results, causes or correlates of success in second language learning (see Gardner 1980, Brown 1973, 1980 for summaries of that research).

The term "affect" is used here in a technical sense (see Guiora 1972) to refer to the subjective dimension of our emotions. For example, affect is said to be the relatively amorphous "feeling" attached, in some degree, to every concept constructed by a human mind. As it is generally described in the psychological literature, affect cannot be totally comprehended or defined by consciousness (in part because affect attached to one concept will, by definition, overlap with that attached to related concepts). One important issue in this paper is the *extent* to which affect can be described systematically and altered in language teaching.

William Acton is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, University of Houston–University Park.

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(Note also that the relationship between affect, attitude and motivation is essentially hierarchical: Affect is part of attitude, just as attitude, in turn, is a basic component of motivation.)

The focus on affect in second language acquisition and pedagogy has been fruitful, but it has not met expectations on several counts. A basic premise of this paper is that, although the relative importance of affect to second language learning may have been highly exaggerated by some, we must now be careful not to throw out the "affective baby" with the "non-directive, Rogerian Bath." In that regard, the central concern of the model presented here is a better understanding of the relationship between affect and cognition in language teaching. In developing that model I will review some relatively recent affect-related studies and examine applications of that research for the ESL curriculum designer and classroom teacher, given our current theoretical, "communicative" climate.

Affect and Context

Research has consistently pointed to the importance of the attitudes of those with whom the learner associates inside and outside of the classroom and the learner's perception of attitudes in the larger target-language environment. Studies following from the Gardner and Lambert (1972) paradigm have identified strong attitudinal effects related to one's instructor, classmates, parents, or classes in society (e.g., Gardner, Smythe, Clement and Gliksman 1976). Although not as empirically based, Schumann's (1978) "social distance," representing the socio-psychological effect of group attitudes and exclusiveness, figures prominently in his arguments for the similarity of second language learning to pidginization.

By focusing attention on the attitudes of society, we as a professional organization are becoming better able to work at changing root causes of failure in language learning, whether they be in the social milieu, the home or in Congress. Attitude research has provided one of the best sources of support for various programs in bilingual education (see Troike 1978). Likewise, the arguments relating to the use of immersion programs turn crucially on the question of community attitudes (see Swain 1984).

Optimal language learning attitude and motivation may not be the same in all contexts. In some situations an integrative motive seems to serve the learner best; in others, an instrumental motive may be better (see Gardner and Lambert 1972; Lukmani 1972). In Acton (1979), for instance, some of the learners indicating the strongest values on the integration scale were the least successful: those claiming to be *both* strongly integrative and instrumental tended to be the more proficient. Similarly, a good "attitude" does not insure success in language learning. Oller, Baca and Vigil (1977) demonstrated that in some contexts a *negative* attitude toward the target culture or some sub-group may correlate with higher proficiency.

For the classroom such seemingly contradictory results suggest that optimal attitude and motivation can still be determined in some general way but may be quite context-dependent, a function of the individual learner and the situation.

Research Methodology

An important advance in the last ten years in language acquisition research in general, and research in affective variables in particular has been the move

away from *uni*-variate to *multi*-variate analyses and models. No one would report on a study today where only the integrative/instrumental dimension (or just one notion of attitude) was "measured" without including a constellation of other related variables as well. We understand that there is generally a substantial amount of overlap in variance accounted for among affective variables.

A good example of this change in perspective is evident in a comparison of Suter (1976) with Purcell and Suter (1980). In Suter (1976) 20 different predictor variables (five being "affective" in nature) were correlated with pronunciation authenticity, one-on-one, with 12 showing significance at the .01 level or better. In Purcell and Suter (1980), however, a multiple regression was used on the same data (as in Purcell 1976). The result was that only four variables appeared to be contributing significantly to the main effect: accurate pronunciation. Given the measurement techniques used, eight of the twelve "significant" factors from the first study were shown to be nondiscrete; they were virtually identical in their ability to predict pronunciation authenticity, adding nothing to the predictive power of the overall research instrument. Of the original 20 variables there were few that did not seem *intuitively* to have a significant influence on pronunciation or be good predictors of pronunciation authenticity; there were only about four independent underlying effects.

That attitudes attached to related concepts may "overlap" considerably is well established (see Osgood, May and Miron 1975). Whatever attitude a learner has toward the target language may influence to a significant degree the attitude toward the culture. Similarly, we would expect that attitude toward the language might affect attitude toward learning. As Savignon (1972) and others have demonstrated, proficiency and attitude are interrelated: attitude may ultimately determine attained proficiency but, conversely, proficiency also affects attitude. Heyde (1979) found something analogous in studying the relationship between language learning and self-esteem; those with high self-esteem tend to be better learners, and as one's competence improves, self-esteem tends to be enhanced accordingly.

There are any number of factors that may underlie subjects' performance on questionnaires requiring self-reports of affect. Oller and Perkins (1978) identify several ways in which responses may be "contaminated" by factors such as expectation of what the tester wants, self-flattery, understanding of the question, and "response set" (i.e., subjects tend to give answers in the same "manner" throughout a test). Oller and Perkins argue convincingly that such factors may account for a great deal of the variance in attitude/proficiency studies. There are still, nonetheless, serious unresolved methodological issues involved in attempts to measure or discount the importance of affective variables in second language learning (see Gardner 1980, Oller 1982, and Gardner and Gliksman 1982).

Following in part from the above outlined research the relative importance of affect (vis-a-vis cognition) in second language pedagogy has shifted over the course of the last six to eight years (at least in the U.S.). It has been a "given" for many that affective variables such as attitude and motivation were *the* most powerful determinants of success in learning *anything*, not just language. That is not to say that conscious, cognitive structuring of the classroom experience has not been attended to; only that in understanding and attempting to influence learning, many chose to address affect first, giving it precedence over cognitive considerations within an overall approach and method.

Curran probably represents the most coherent statement of that AFFECTIVE → COGNITIVE directionality:

> . . . We wanted some kind of *total experience*, not simply an "intellectual" one.
> In our attempt to accomplish this, we took as our model *the affect-cognitive intercommunication* that seems to constitute a basic aspect of the counseling relationship. One of the functions of the counseling response is to relate affect, emotional, instinctive, or somatic, to cognition. Understanding the language of affect, or "feelings," the counselor responds in the language of cognition. . . (1976:153).

In Counseling Language Learning (CLL) a fundamental concept is that we must attend to affect *first*, that the affect-related needs of the learner must be met. What makes CLL somewhat unique is that methodologically it uses affect-centered activities such as talking about feelings and self-esteem a central agenda in generating talk and language tokens, language structure and lexicon being decidedly secondary and generally "post hoc."[1]

This notion of seeing affect as the "way in" to language teaching, an assumption (often implicit) in the writing of proponents of various approaches and methods, has been discussed and criticized extensively (see Clarke 1982).

What seems to me to be a more promising model for language teaching is evident in Hamilton (1983). He and many others (see Walker de Felix forthcoming) argue that reported data on affective states must be thought of as being *ontogenetically* cognitive: *access* to feelings as we attempt to verbalize them (e.g., answering a questionnaire) or even think about them is almost entirely cognitive-symbolic. We experience and express our feelings and attitudes only by means of and through symbolic systems (cognitive schemas and languages). Hamilton's cognitive-processing perspective strongly emphasizes the role played by our socially-derived conceptual apparati in determining what we "feel," whether it be pain or any form of emotional response. The corrollary of that position is that our initial approach to altering "feelings" ought to be back through those same affect-controlling/interpreting cognitive-semantic networks. Moreover, perception of and change in affect is said to be always dependent upon and *follow* some level of cognitive processing.[2]

Figure 1: Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Self-Reports of Affect represents what seems to me to be the view of affect that is emerging today from various disciplines.

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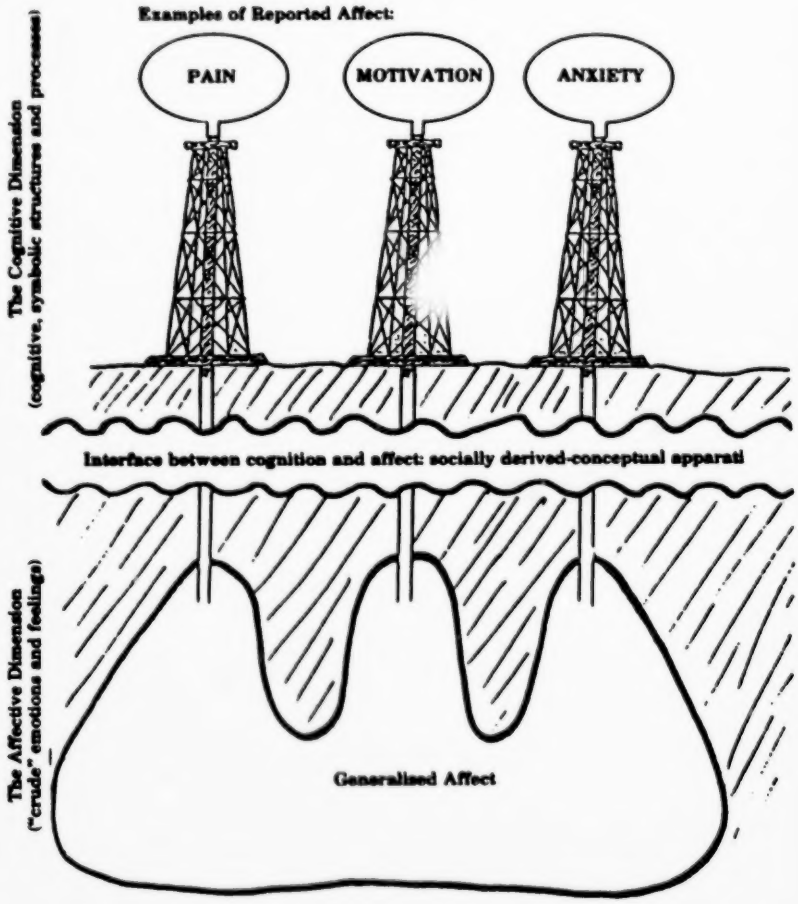
[1]This is not intended as a criticism of CLL, by any means. As Stevick (1980) points out, CLL is an extraordinarily powerful and effective approach under appropriate conditions. It does, however, have relatively limited applicability (see, Brown 1977).

[2]This is also probably the case in so-called "right-brain" oriented approaches (see Lozanov 1979). There is little evidence that the left hemisphere, the seat of more cognitive, analytic functions, is significantly less involved when right-brain exercises such as visualization or music or physical movement are engaged in, only that the right hemisphere may be more involved or active. In other words, the cognitive-analytic centers are still contributing significantly to the interpretation of that experience. Perhaps we cannot avoid left hemisphere involvement but we can enhance right hemisphere-like functions.

FIGURE 1
Cognitive and Affective Dimensions
of Self-Reports of Affect



This oil field metaphor was suggested by fellow Texans, Bernadette and Brian McKinney (personal communication). It vividly depicts the model being developed here: (1) our perception of affect (whether our own or by reports from others) is very much dependent upon the cognitive structures constituting our belief systems (represented by the derricks here!) (2) although something of our "feelings" related to one object will probably be rather specific (i.e., the "humps" in the "affective" oil dome), there is a larger underlying "pool" of affect/emotion that

allows great transference from one object to another. (The notion of transference of emotional loadings is a basic concept in most forms of psychotherapy.)

One important implication of that model for second language teaching is that good attitudes are fostered more by effective learning and "successful" behavior than by conscious attention to attitude "rehabilitation"—independent of specific content—as an educational objective. The so-called "affective taxonomy" (Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia 1964) should not be seen as conceptually on a par with schema of cognitive abilities (Bloom 1956). It is a matter of directionality as mentioned earlier. This suggests that in teaching our "way in" ought to be through cognitively-oriented activities with significantly less formal attention paid to affective variables (e.g., rapport, attitude, empathy) in isolation. Hamilton (1983) argues that affective concerns must be fully integrated into central cognitive processing, in effect doing away with the entire cognitive-affective dichotomy. There is an obvious parallel here to the integration of language teaching with "content" instruction (see Widdowson 1978).

The "Way In"

A friend recently reported on a training program he had completed in selling industrial equipment. He was given what were said to be the six secrets of successful selling, listed in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2

The Six Secrets of Successful Selling
(Listed in order of importance)

Customers want to hear five things:

1) That the product will *make* them money;
2) That it will *save* them money;
3) That it will make them *look* better;
4) That it will make them *feel* better;
5) That it will improve their sex lives;
6) Underlying all others:
   Selling is at least 90% emotional.

The analogy between successful selling of equipment and successful selling of ESL methods and materials aside, there is for contemporary language teaching methodology another more interesting application of those principles: the relatively greater importance of cognitive—as distinct from "affective"—variables in accounting for successful learning and teaching. (Note how the "principles" become more and more affective in nature as you proceed from one to six.)

Not long ago we were being told something analogous to the sixth assertion: that getting students to learn language was about 90% attitude. Even if that were the case, it does not necessarily mean that our primary tasks ought to be simply to change attitudes.

For the last year or so I have been asking groups of ESL professionals and teachers-in-training to respond to the following set of instructions (the resultant "data" bear an interesting resemblance to the "Secrets of Successful Selling"):

"Assume that you have just finished teaching an hour lesson that went beautifully. Everything clicked. Recall, if you will, a recent experience of that kind. Now, quickly, without doing a great deal of introspection, write down the first three things you think of in answer to the question: Why did that session go so well? How would you explain it? What are the first few explanatory principles that come to mind for you?"

The first responses of teachers have tended to fall in four categories/levels:

FIGURE 3
Initial Explanations for the "Great Class" (N = 90)

I. (.33)
Clarity of Goals and Lesson Structure

II. (.20)
a. Subject of inherent interest

(.20)
b. Teacher felt "good"

III. (.15)
Students were "up," responsive

IV. (.12)
"Spontaneous combustion" (no clear "cause")

The first category (.33) is ostensibly cognitive, clarity of goals and lesson structuring. The other three categories seem to be progressively less cognitive and more affect-oriented, more "feeling" based. In category four, responses tended to be of the following type: "It just happened," "We just hit it off," etc. Note that comments such as "I was well prepared" were included in I; IIb was reserved for statements reflecting on the "well being" or "emotional" state of the teacher.

At one time or another all five of those perspectives have been proposed as the beginning point, conceptually, for language instruction or attitude change, as the "way in." Although pedagogical focus on any one area may effect change in others, where you begin – whether from a cognitive or affective perspective – does make a difference. It probably says something quite meaningful about one's model of teaching and how one responds (generally unconsciously) on the spot in the classroom.

One of my favorite stories in that regard concerns an "experiment" I once conducted to demonstrate to a class of intermediate-level ESL students the powerful impact student attention has on a teacher. Having trained the class in verbal

attending behaviors (Ivey and Authier 1978, Acton 1984), such as types of questions and ways of expressing interest or enthusiasm, and having trained them in attending nonverbally, e.g., eye contact, smiling, posture and notetaking, I instructed them as a class to practice covertly that behavior on their next-hour instructor. They apparently did a fine job. When I saw the teacher later that day and asked him how things were going that his comment was that he should be well prepared more often (category I). When a week later we reversed the treatment – I told the students not to exhibit strong attending behavior (i.e., not to look at the instructor or take notes or ask many questions) – his response to me was that the students seemed unresponsive and tired, he was just feeling off that day; he had strained his voice. (I should add that I did later fill him in on what was afoot.)

The instructor (unconsciously) identified the cognitive side of the multidimensional experience of a *successful* class, but remarked on the affective or attitudinal dimension in response to a *less successful* class.

Now compare the "Secrets of Successful Selling (Figure 2)," the "Initial Explanations for the 'Great' Class (Figure 3)," and the instructor's two reactions to my "experiment." Notice that in all three cases the initial explanation for success is a cognitive map of sorts, either a plan for making money or a lesson plan. At the other end of the continua we find talk of general responsiveness, spontaneous combustion or sex – decidedly more emotion-oriented concepts.

What that argues for is a more appropriate perspective on the role of affect in second language pedagogy, that it should be seen as important yet *secondary* to cognition. Because cognition-centered language learning and teaching entails exhaustive treatment of "affective" factors (by definition – assuming the validity of Hamilton 1983(a well-executed "cognitive" activity (even a drill!) must of necessity be well-executed affectively.[3]

The Communicative Approach (or Way[4]) to Affect

The integration of the cognitive and affective, apparent throughout the humanities and social sciences, has also been evident for quite some time now in linguistics and applied linguistics. As our understanding of how language is used has grown, more phenomena once consigned to the category of "affect" (meaning something that went on unconsciously or was loosely associated with emotion) have come to be seen as more systematic and cognitive in nature. Nowhere is

[3]Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) consign affect to an "affective filter" metaphor, independent of and "prior to" cognitive processing. Affect in Hamilton's model does not *constrain* performance or learning, it is (simply) an essential feature or characteristic of central cognitive processing. Taking the metaphor seriously, the "filter" suggests a more segregated role in teaching.

[4]The use of the word "way" in this paper was chosen for a number of reasons – including the association with Stevick's treatment of the generally affect-centered approaches in *A Way and Ways* (1980). Stevick's "Way" refers to an approach or a "meta approach" relating the commonalities of the popular approaches he treats. My use of "Way In" here denotes the theoretical point of entry into an approach or the pedagogical practice of listing in assumed order of importance (if only implicitly) language teaching objectives and methods to achieve those objectives.

that more evident than in the case of what used to be termed the "emotional connotations" of words. As we better understand how to describe context and develop more elaborate frameworks for studying suprasegmentals seemingly, unsystematic emotion-related phenomena appear less problematic and more predictable. Such research in linguistics, especially in pragmatics, has already begun to have an impact on language teaching (see Bolinger 1983). The recent developments in notional/functional syllabus design (see Munby 1978, Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983) and the Communicative Approach (see Breen and Candlin 1980) offer real promise. In any in-depth analysis of the functions necessary for conversational competence in English (or any language), there is certain to be a significant amount of space devoted to "attitudinal tone," what Hymes (1971) terms "communicative key," and systematic attention to the language of expressing emotion (see Munby 1978, Johnson and Morrow 1981).

One of the inevitable consequences of encouraging genuine communication is that subjects which are highly emotionally charged inevitably come up. For example, should we discover that community attitudes toward our students are not exactly warm and accepting, we should teach the students how to understand, express and respond to those attitudes. Both the earlier "affective" approaches of the 1970's and more recent notional-functional models appear to agree. There are two important differences, however. First, whereas in earlier approaches (see Curran 1976) the generation of appropriate expressions was essentially "post hoc", i.e., vocabulary was not prepared or even "known" prior to the communicative activity itself, in a communicative approach (see Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983) many maintain that the basic inventory of necessary expressions or exponents should have been already arrived at by means of a notional-functional analysis of relevant topics and contexts, and be available to both learner and instructor. Second, the "way in" to the syllabus is significantly different. Instead of foregrounding affective objectives (see Moskowitz 1978), in a communicative approach more cognition-based communicative outcomes, e.g., negotiating a price, registering a complaint, are specified.

The effect of that change in perspective is important. Conceptually the syllabus and curriculum move from communicative event or outcome "down" to the level of "function" (e.g., expressing emotions). The actual materials used (in a truly communicative curriculum) provide the instructor with sets of contextually-indexed expressions which may be turn out to be relevant in the activity (e.g., a role play), including ways of presenting and coping with attitudes.

Conclusion

There are at least four applications of the research reported here that should be of significant "cash value" to the classroom teacher:

I. Affective variables are context-sensitive in at least two ways. It is dangerous to try to assign labels such as "integrative" or "positive" or "negative" to individuals as explanations or predictors of success, but research findings on attitudes at the broader societal level provide us with essential political understanding.

II. Even though many of our common-sense notions of attitude have been shown to be exceedingly difficult to measure or seem to suffer from a great deal of conceptual overlap, the same research can be interpreted to mean that attitudes are contagious (changing one will affect others), and that the general "attitude" of students can be influenced from various directions.

Furthermore, because research seems to show that constructs we have been treating as discrete may refer to a common underlying effect, it does not mean that those same constructs cannot (in principle) still serve useful purposes in conceptualizing and organizing a teaching approach. We must often treat the same problem from many different perspectives for things to "sink in."

III. Research in pragmatics and discourse analysis, along with the new focus on communicative functions related to dealing with emotion, will provide us with a better understanding of the language of expressing emotions and attitudes in both this culture and language, and others. Language teaching materials based on such research will be enormously valuable.

IV. Any expression of affect is a symbolic, cognitive activity. Similarly, our "way in" to language teaching and our algorithm for design of curriculum ought to correspond roughly to the hierarchically ordered sets of principles we see in both the "Secrets of Successful Selling" or "Explanations for the Great Class." Attitude, motivation and affect must be seen as important components of one's theory of second language acquisition and pedagogy, but should not be treated as conceptually "prior" to or relatively independent of cognition and cognitive-behavioral outcomes.

After all, well-executed drilling, whether for oil, grammar or affect, entails avoiding "gushers" while at the same time providing for the rigorous, controlled use of a vital resource. The "affective domain" should be seen in proper context: subsumed within a more cognition-centered psychological theory and the "communicative" curriculum.

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